

55. Vaisnava aparadha – part 2

Three kinds of *vaisnava aparadhas*

What about criticism and blasphemy in the mind? Srila Prabhupada explains in the Srimad Bhagavatam that in *kaliyuga* sinful activities performed only in the mind are not counted as offences. Nonetheless, three kinds of offences have to be mentioned: (1) offences in the mind, (2) offences with words, and (3) offences through activities.

Generally, offences develop in the mind and are expressed later on the gross level. First one thinks, “You fool!”; then one says, “You fool!”; and finally, after having waited before the shower for ten minutes, one pushes someone else out of the shower. In this way offenses arise successively: First in thinking, then in feeling, and finally in acting.

The *Skanda Purana* warns us to beware of the following offenses against *Vaisnavas*, which include offenses committed with body, mind and words:

My dear King, if one derides an exalted devotee, he loses the results of his pious activities, his opulence, his reputation and his sons. *Vaisnavas* are all great souls. Whoever blasphemes them falls down to the hell known as Maharaurava. He is also accompanied by his forefathers. Whoever kills or blasphemes a *Vaisnava* and whoever is envious of a *Vaisnava* or angry with him, or whoever does not offer him obeisances or feel joy upon seeing a *Vaisnava*, certainly falls into a hellish condition.

In the *Caitanya-bhagavata*, it is stated:

Lord Caitanya said, “All living entities in the countless universes are My eternal servants. Therefore every living being that hurts or abuses another living being, will be destroyed. Even a sannyasi who blasphemes an innocent person will fall down and lose all his piety.

Then Lord Caitanya raised His golden arms and declared to the whole world, “Just give up the tendency to criticize others, and chant *Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare / Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare!* I will personally liberate every one who chants the name of Krsna without criticizing others.” When the assembled devotees heard Caitanya Mahaprabhu speaking like this, they exclaimed with full joy, “*Jaya! Jaya! Jaya!*”

However, by the mercy of Lord Caitanya the first kind of offense – namely offenses committed in the mind – have been extinguished. Only offenses committed by word or action are taken into consideration. On the other hand, simply thinking positively in reference to devotees or to devotional service is already taken into account. That is Lord Caitanya’s special mercy.

How can *vaisnava aparadhas* be rectified?

If anyone offends a devotee in a moment of delusion or madness, he should honestly repent, go to the offended devotee and seriously beg for forgiveness. Because the devotee is merciful by nature, he will forgive the offender. Srila Prabhupada explains in the Srimad Bhagavatam, “By offering sincere obeisances to someone, one obliges the heart of that person.” Such is the beauty and important power of a serious obeisance.

If one realizes that he has not appreciated a *Vaisnava* properly and has offended him for various reasons, it is best not to wait too long, but to approach him immediately and offer obeisances unto him.

But one should also consider the reason for this advice: The *vaisnavas* are very dear to Krsna, and only through them it is possible to advance spiritually. Therefore, one should not delay to repent. Else, one will remain in a contaminated state of mind for long time. In this attitude one commits further offenses and thus enters into a vicious circle. (Extract from the Nectarean Ocean of the Holy name...)

Discovery:

1. What are the three types of offences?
2. How does *vaisnava aparadh* affect the person committing such *vaisnava aparadh*?
3. Whom will Lord Caitanya personally liberate?

Understanding:

1. How are offences from the mind expressed in action / at the gross level?
2. Why does Lord Catanya say that *vaisnava aparadha* is not tolerated by the Lord?
3. Which offence is extinguished by the mercy of Lord Caitanya?
4. What is Lord Caitanya's special mercy?
5. How can *vaisnava aparadha* be rectified?
6. Why should we immediately repent if *vaisnava aparadha* is committed and beg for forgiveness?

Application:

Every time we commit *vaisnava aparadh* all we need to do is chant 'vanca kalpa tarubyas ca..' and we can be rid of the offence. What is your opinion? Discuss.

SRI NAMAMRTA

One must not sin with the intention of chanting Hare Krsna to neutralize the reactions:

Along with the devotees from Bengal came a gentleman named Kālidāsa. He never uttered anything but the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Kālidāsa was a very advanced devotee, yet he was simple and liberal. He would chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa while performing all his ordinary dealings. When he used to throw dice in jest, he would throw the dice while chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

In this connection Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura warns the men of this age not to imitate the jesting of a mahā-bhāgavata like Kālidāsa. If someone imitates him by playing with dice or gambling while chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, he will certainly become a victim of offenses unto the holy name. As it is said, hari-nāma-bale pāpe pravṛtti: one must not commit sinful activities on the strength of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Playing with dice is certainly gambling, but it is clearly said here that Kālidāsa did this only in jest. A mahā-bhāgavata can do anything, but he never forgets the basic principles. Therefore it is said, vaiṣṇavera kriyā-mudrā vijñeha nā bujhaya: [Cc. Madhya 23.39] "No one can understand the activities of a pure devotee." We should not imitate Kālidāsa.

(CC Antya 16.5-7)

PREACHING IS THE ESSENCE

One who does not take advantage of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is doomed:

There is now a flood of the eternal nectar of love of Godhead due to the incarnation of Lord Caitanya. All living entities are floating in that flood. The entire world is now thankful to the Lord. Anyone who does not float in this inundation is most condemned. Such a person cannot be delivered for millions of kalpas.

One day of Brahmā is called a kalpa. A yuga, or mahā-yuga, consists of 4,320,000 years, and one thousand such mahā-yugas constitute one kalpa. The author of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta says that if one does not take advantage of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he cannot be delivered for millions of such kalpas.

(CC. Antya 3.254-255)